

(a) whether any long term effective solution for the delays in flights is being explored and whether airports can be held responsible for this or there are some other reasons;

(b) whether simplification of procedures at the airports is being considered; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (c) The nature of air travel being highly complex and dependent on many diverse factors, one of the prime concerns is safety of both aircraft and passengers. The delays are mostly due to technical factors like airworthiness of the aircraft, landing aids etc. and external conditions such as weather etc. and flights are operated only when all parameters for safe operations are met. In view of the above, the minimization in the delay in flights is a continuous process. All technical delays are closely monitored and corrective actions are initiated to avoid their recurrence. There are standing Delay Monitoring Committees and technical Cell in line Maintenance Division of the airlines for this purpose. The State-of-the-art automated air traffic service systems have been installed at, Delhi and Mumbai airports under the modernisation programme. Efforts are also being made to improve the physical infrastructure to increase the handling capacity and reduce delays.

Operational cost of IA/AI plane

2551. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the operational cost of the planes under Indian Airlines and Air India is higher than that of other Airlines;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any scheme has been formulated by Government to reduce the operational cost; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the annual reduction in the operational cost proposed to be made?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) The operational cost of the aircraft varies from airline to airline because of

their distinct operational requirement/limitations, route network, mix of aircraft fleet and input prices characteristics like rate of exchange, customs duty and other taxes/levies, etc.

(c) and (d) Airlines make continuous endeavour to reduce the operational cost and optimize resource earning through various measures viz. better fleet utilization, improvement in quality of products, marketing initiatives, cost control mechanism etc.

Complimentary air tickets

2552. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of free air tickets issued by the Airlines in their commercial interest and to encourage and promote travel on the national carriers during the last three years, year-wise; and

(b) the details of benefits accrued during these years by providing these complimentary tickets?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARADYADAV): (a) The number of complimentary tickets issued by the Air India and Indian Airlines during the last three years are as under:—

No. of complimentary tickets issued

Year	Air India	Indian Airlines
1997-98	726	590
1998-99	1164	860
1999-2000	983	955

(b) These tickets are issued for publicity and promotional purposes. The benefits accrued are in the form of enhancing their market image, goodwill and publicity.

Grading of AI and IA in terms of safety

2553. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state: